

"I don't want to be on the Law Review." He said, "But you get to clerk for the Supreme Court." I said, "I don't want to clerk for the Supreme Court." He said, "You'll make more money." I said, "I don't give a damn about that. I want to go home." So he's giving his best pitch, and I see Hillary all the way across the library, and she sees me staring at her. And she put her book down, walked across the library, and she said, "Look, if you're going to keep looking at me, and I'm going to keep looking back, at least we ought to know each other's names. I'm Hillary Rodham. What's your name?"

I couldn't remember my name. *[Laughter]* Now, that's how we met. I say that to remove any doubt that she has the requisite aggression to be a good New Yorker. *[Laughter]*

I want to tell you that, for me, this is a birthday for Hillary that is filled with gratitude. The people of New York have been so wonderful to me in two Presidential elections and all the years in between. You have, for the last 16 months, opened your hearts to her and given her a chance to make her case. And I am so grateful to you.

You know, we've had a lot of fun here, making fun of politicians, including me. And it's all been in fun. But I'd like to tell you something seriously. When I leave office, after 26 years of running for office or serving in public life, I will be more idealistic about this country than I was the day I took the oath of office as President, the day I took my first public office.

And I've known a lot of people in politics, thousands of them, Republicans and Democrats and the occasional independent. And on balance, I've found them to be good, honest, hard-working people who love our country and do what they think is right. And they're better, on balance, than they get played out in the popular

press. But in all these years, I have never, ever, ever known anybody that had the combination of intelligence and heart and consistent caring and persistence and ability to organize and energize other people and get things done that Hillary has. She's the best I have ever known.

And I am quite sure that if she hadn't spent the last 30 years helping me and helping children and families' causes, starting organizations and heading others, and always doing things for other people and never asking anybody until this election to do anything for her, that she would have been doing this years ago. When we met and fell in love, I actually—I told her forthrightly that I almost hated her to come home to Arkansas and start our life together because I thought she had immense talent, and I felt that I somehow would be depriving her of a public career. So for me, the feelings I have for all of you for lifting her up and supporting her and giving her a chance to serve this State and serve this Nation are almost inexpressible.

It's worth noting that this seat was held not only by Daniel Patrick Moynihan, one of the great intellects and public servants of the last 50 years, but also by Senator Robert Kennedy, who inspired me and so many people of my generation to believe that we could make a better country. And I want you to know that if you just keep working for 13 more days, she is going to make you profoundly proud that you have helped her in this.

And on top of that, she looks pretty good to be 53 years old, wouldn't you say? *[Applause]* So I want you to stand up with me and offer a toast to the next United States Senator from New York.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 p.m. at the Roseland Ballroom. In his remarks, he referred to actor Tom Cruise.

Statement on Admission of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Into the Stability Pact

October 26, 2000

I applaud today's decision by the members of the Stability Pact to welcome the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as a new member. Last

month the people of Yugoslavia spoke clearly in support of democratic change. The response today from the international community is just

as clear. We will stand with the new democratic government as it pursues economic and political reform, meets its international obligations, and works with neighboring countries to promote lasting stability throughout the region.

We helped launch the Stability Pact last year with a common understanding that an undivided, democratic, and peaceful Europe will be a reality only when the countries of southeast Europe are integrated with the rest of the continent. To achieve this goal, the governments of the region are pressing ahead with reforms; the international community is supporting the region's economic development and integration;

and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia can now play its own indispensable role in that effort.

At previous Stability Pact conferences, we invited participation by the political opposition in Serbia and by the democratic government in the Republic of Montenegro, both of which had the courage to stand up to the violence and corruption of the Milosevic regime. But we always kept open a chair for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Now the dramatic changes in Belgrade allow the chair for Yugoslavia to be filled. This is a major step towards realizing our shared vision of a region committed to peace, to healing the wounds of war, and to taking its place in a peaceful, undivided, and democratic Europe.

Statement on the 2000 Annual Report on School Safety

October 26, 2000

I am pleased that the 2000 Annual Report on School Safety released today by the Departments of Justice and Education shows that crime and violence in our Nation's schools continue to decline. Since 1992, rates of serious crime, including violent crime, have declined steadily in our schools, and the number of non-fatal crimes in schools is down by more than 21 percent. Between 1992 and 1997, the number of students who report carrying a weapon to school decreased by 25 percent. School homicides, which remain extremely rare, are also on the decline. This report provides encouraging data that our efforts to protect our children are having an impact.

Since Vice President Gore and I took office, we have encouraged communities to come together to ensure that our schools are safe places for learning. By making school safety a top priority, our administration has helped provide more and better trained police officers in

schools, vastly increased funding for after-school programs, required zero tolerance for guns in schools, and funded more mentors and school counselors to help our kids stay on the right track.

We owe it to our children to make sure that crime in school continues to decline. We can continue our progress by supporting comprehensive, locally based efforts such as the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative. Across the Nation, 77 communities have received \$147 million under this innovative program to fund enhanced educational, mental health, and law enforcement services. Programs such as this one allow us to promote the healthy development of our students and to identify those children who may be having problems and get them the help they need to turn things around. By working together, we can continue our success in making America's schools safe for each and every student in our Nation.

Statement on Reaching the Nation's Highest Homeownership Rate

October 26, 2000

Today I am proud to announce that our Nation has broken a new record. According to the Department of Housing and Urban Develop-

ment, America has reached its highest homeownership rates ever. This is tremendous new evidence that more and more American families